

МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ

НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ ТЕХНІЧНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ
«ХАРКІВСЬКИЙ ПОЛІТЕХНІЧНИЙ ІНСТИТУТ»

МЕТОДИЧНІ ВКАЗІВКИ
*з розвитку навичок написання
проектних робіт*

для студентів I – III курсів факультету КІТ та ЕК
(Англійська мова)

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Укладачі: Н.М. Рябова
Н.В. Полоусова
Г.С. Тарасова

Рецензент: Г.В. Комова

Кафедра міжкультурної комунікації та іноземної мови

ПЕРЕДМОВА

Дані методичні вказівки призначені для самостійної та аудиторної роботи студентів I — III курсів факультету КІТ та ЕК.

Вони мають за мету розвиток навичок написання проектних робіт студентів, з використанням типових завдань з технік анотування та реферування та інших, спрямованих на краще оволодіння змістом і взагалі письмовою мовою.

Матеріал вказівок містить 11 текстів, присвячених різним темам загального та спеціального характеру та вправ, що вимагають від студентів подальшої роботи та складання власних проектів.

Дані методичні вказівки складено на базі матеріалів автентичних курсів, розроблених Оксфордським університетом, а також з використанням матеріалів Інтернету.

I. Describing a film or book you have enjoyed

1. Read the review of the film *Kolya* and complete the gaps with the appropriate phrase from the box below.

(a) _____ is *Kolya*. What's unusual about it is that a film from the Czech Republic, and it's nice to have a change from American movies!

(b) _____ because it won an Oscar for Best Foreign Film so I thought it must be (c) _____ (d) _____ by a man called Jan Sverak, and (e) _____ a Czech actor Zdenek Sverak, as well as a young Russian child actor, Andrej Chalimov.

The film (f) _____ Prague, the capital city, and the action begins in the late 1980s, just before the Velvet Revolution, when communism was replaced by

democracy. (g) _____ of Louka, a musician with the state symphony orchestra, who suddenly loses his job, and is forced to play music at funerals in order to make a living.

Eventually, he meets and marries a Russian woman, but unfortunately, she is only interested in getting citizenship, and immediately after the wedding she flees to Germany, leaving Louka to cope with her five-year old son (h) _____ by Andrej Chalimov. The film follows the relationships between the man and the boy, and the way they eventually learn to adapt to each other's way of life. Although (i) _____, and a little slow-moving at times, there were a number of things I really liked about it. (j) _____ the acting, which I thought was excellent (particularly Sverak and the boy), and I also liked the touches of humour, which were very subtle and gentle. (k) _____ how people live their lives in such a different culture from mine.

(l) _____ this film to anyone who is interested in seeing something different from the usual action-packed Hollywood blockbuster, and also anyone who enjoys a good cry!

| |
|--|
| <p>worth seeing it starts It tells the story of</p> <p>I particularly wanted to see it</p> <p>On the whole, I'd certainly recommend</p> <p>I was especially impressed by It's directed</p> <p>One of best films I've seen this year</p> <p>the film is a little sentimental brilliantly played</p> <p>I also found it very interesting to see is set in</p> |
|--|

2. Complete the table using information from the review.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Title | a |
| b Reason for going to see it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a change from American movies - because it won an Oscar for Best Foreign Film |
| Director | c |
| d | Zdenek Sverak Andrej Chalimov |
| Where/ when the film is set | e |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| f | A musician with the state symphony orchestra loses his job. While working as a musician at funerals, he meets... |
| Positive points about the film | g |
| h | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a bit sentimental, - slow moving at times |
| Who I'd recommend it to | i |

3. Make a similar table about a film or play you have seen recently, or a book you have read. Which sections do you need to change if you write about a book? Complete your table with as much information as possible.

4. Use the table to write your own account of a film, play or book you have enjoyed. The other students are going to read your review, so make sure it is clear and accurate.

5. Display the reviews on a wall or desk. Which of the films / plays / books have you already seen / read? Do you agree with the writer's comments? After reading the reviews will you read / see any of the films or books? Which ones?

II. Avoiding repetition

1. Read Marisol's story. If necessary, check the meaning of the words in the box in your dictionary. In pairs, discuss briefly what happened.

| |
|---|
| a hairpin bend to freewheel the crater of a volcano |
|---|

The most frightening experience of my life

One of the most frightening experiences of my life happened while I was spending Christmas in Tenerife, in the Canary Islands. My brother Jose was working in Tenerife (there) and unfortunately my brother Jose (he)

couldn't get any time to come home, so I went to spend (spent) the holiday with my brother Jose (him). On the last day of my holiday (visit) we decided to go up Mt Teide – Mt Teide is a volcano in the center of Tenerife (the island) and officially Mt Teide is the second largest mountain in Europe. We hired a little car for the day – I couldn't drive at the time, but my brother could drive.

Jose and I set off in brilliant sunshine, before long it got much colder and by the time we reached the crater of Mt Teide it was snowing. What is more, all the restaurants, hotels and petrol stations at the top of Mt Teide were shut. It was then that Jose and I realized that we had almost run out of petrol. Running out of petrol was particularly desperate because I had to catch the plane home that evening, and if I didn't catch the plane, I would have to pay for a new ticket. So Jose decided to do something incredibly dangerous – Jose decided to switch off the engine of the car and freewheel down the other side of Mt Teide. Jose freewheeled the side of Mt Teide for several kilometers, along hairpin bends on dangerous icy roads. I was absolutely petrified, but for some reason I didn't tell Jose to stop.

Then my worst nightmare happened: the car slipped on the slippery road, and the two front wheels went over the edge. We were very lucky that the rest of the car didn't go over the edge. Jose and I sat in the car for about half an hour, not daring to move and freezing cold. No other cars even passed by, until suddenly a car came round the corner and out jumped three enormous men. Without saying a word, the three men surrounded the car and literally lifted it back on the road. When my brother and I got out to thank them, the three men just repeated "Norway" several times – my brother and I assumed that Norway was where the three men came from – then the three men got back into their car and drove off. We got back into our car and continued down the side of Mt Teide. I have never felt so relieved in my life as I felt when we reached the town – and the petrol station – at the bottom!

2. The grammar Marisol uses is correct, and many of the expressions she uses are very good, but she keeps repeating the same words which makes the story sound unnatural. Her teacher has corrected the first paragraph, showing her how to avoid this:

- a) by using pronouns to replace nouns
- b) by using auxiliary verbs to replace full verbs
- c) by using alternative words with the same or a similar meaning
- d) by omitting the repeated words, if possible

Read the first paragraph and find examples of each.

3. Look at the second paragraph of Marisol's story. Her teacher has underlined the unnecessary repetitions, but has not corrected them. Correct them using the methods in Exercise 2.

4. The third paragraph has not been corrected. Find examples of unnecessary repetition and correct them. When you have finished, read through the whole story checking that it sounds natural.

5. Write a story of your own about a frightening experience that you or one of your friends has had. If you cannot think of a true story, invent one.

III. Europeans – united by differences

1. Work in pairs. List as many European countries and nationalities as you can in three minutes.

2. Work in groups.

1. List any stereotyped ideas other nationalities may have about your country and its people.

2. Choose two nationalities. How do people in your country view them?

3. Do you think national stereotypes help us to understand other nationalities, or do they create problems between nationalities?

3. Underline the answer you think is correct.

1. The colour of European Community passports is pink / blue / burgundy.

2. The percentage of Germans who live alone is 9 % / 26 % / 35 %.

3. The Spaniards / Belgians / British go out for a drink more than other Europeans.
4. Adult evening classes are most popular with the Germans / British / Belgians.
5. In Britain black cats are lucky / unlucky.
6. The British / German / Dutch have the biggest beds in their caravans.
7. The most athletic people in Europe are the British / Belgians / French.
8. Italian / Dutch / Spanish husbands do the household shopping most often.
9. The French / Germans / British use public transport the most to travel to work.
10. German, French, and Italian methods of roasting coffee are the same / different.

4. Read the article and check your answers.

We Europeans

For new countries joining the European Union, and older ones getting used to their burgundy passports, becoming “Europeans” is a bit like marrying into a large, eccentric, diverse family. Europeans have a lot in common but it is their differences, not their similarities, which attract the attention of sociologists and market researches, and are more interesting.

35% of Germans live alone; but only 9% of Spaniards. Perhaps this explains why Spaniards lead Europe in the habit of going out for a drink.

The British attend more adult evening classes than anyone else in Europe, and the Belgians least. So it can't just be the dark evenings. There are no figures on how many Britons go for a drink afterwards. If there were, they might be up at the top with Spain!

The British think black cats are lucky. Every other European country regards them as unlucky.

The Dutch and the Germans are the greatest caravanners, but the Germans like bigger bed in their caravans.

The French are the most athletic Europeans. Next come Dutch. But the Belgians, just over the border, play fewest sports.

The Germans spend twice as much on heating as the Spaniards. Well, of course they do, it's colder.

Dutch husbands do the household shopping a lot more often than Italians or Spaniards. Women, you have been warned!

Only the British put their knives and forks 06.30 on the plate when they are finished. Everyone else puts them between 09.15 and 07.25. The British also put salt in the pot with the single hole. This causes visitors considerable confusion.

The French are the champion public transport commuters of Europe. If you hate commuting, go and live in the Netherlands, where journeys to work are shorter than anywhere else.

The amount of direct eye-contact between strangers is three times greater among Spaniards than it is among the British or Swedes. Sharing a lift is a torture for both the British and the Swedish.

No European country really agrees with any other about how to make good coffee. German, Italian, Belgian, French, Greek and Spanish roasting methods are all different.

There are exceptions to all these rules. Approach them in the spirit of children. "If you don't understand each other's language, you just laugh a lot, and eat, and point at things".

5. Discuss your answers to the questions.

1. Have you experienced any of the differences described in the article?
2. What other differences have you discovered between people from other countries?

6. Work in pairs. Prepare three questions on two of the topics below for a mini-survey of your class. Walk around and interview everyone. Then report back on your interviews.

Topics

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Leisure activities | 6. Holidays |
| 2. Sport activities | 7. Shopping habits |
| 3. Adult education classes | 8. Use of the public transport |
| 4. Superstitions | 9. Entertaining guests |
| 5. Drinking / eating out | |

7. Work in groups.

1. Make a list of possible problems you can have the first time you go to another country, e.g. not knowing the system of ordering and paying in a bar or café.
2. Suggest what you can do to avoid or overcome these kinds of problems.
3. Think of some English phrases that would be useful in difficult situations.

8. Project. Write a list of cultural tips for foreign visitors to your country. Include some of the topics given below and add topics of your own.

Possible topics

Introduction and greetings
Ordering and paying in cafes, bars, restaurants
Tipping
Queuing
Using public transport
Invitations
Eye contact and gestures

IV. Destination New York

- 1. Would you like to go to New York for a holiday? Explain why / why not.**

2. Work in groups. Match the places in New York to the descriptions. If you don't know, guess!

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Central Park | 6. Metropolitan Museum of Art |
| 2. Guggenheim Museum | 7. Lincoln Centre |
| 3. Brooklyn Bridge | 8. Chrysler Building |
| 4. Statue of Liberty | 9. Grand Central Terminal |
| 5. Empire State Building | |

Descriptions

- a. People go to its 102nd floor at dusk for spectacular views.
- b. The Metropolitan Opera Company has its opera house there.
- c. It was a gift from the French and 100 years old in 1986.
- d. It has an Egyptian collection covering thirty-six centuries.
- e. It is New York's most famous Art Deco skyscraper.
- f. Its concourse has a night-sky ceiling painted with 2.500 stars.
- g. It is artificial, although many people do not realize this.
- h. It is as famous for its 20th century design as for its exhibits.

3. Read the information about New York and check your answers to 2.

Statue of Liberty

She stands 140 metres tall, a symbol of freedom to arriving immigrants, of whom 17 million entered New York Harbour between 1892 and 1943. A gift from the French, she was shipped to America in 214 cases and raised on her pedestal in 1886. For her 100th birthday in 1986 she was restored and cleaned.

Manhattan Helicopter ride

Breathtaking aerial views of Manhattan and the Statue of Liberty. Superb opportunity for photography. Frequent day and night time departures.

Guggenheim Museum

As famous for the design of its 1959 building, by the American architect Frank Lloyd Wright, as for its 19th and 20th century art collections.

Chrysler Building

Everyone's favourite New York skyscraper. Its architect interrupted work on its construction until work on a rival skyscraper was finished in 1931. When the rival building was described as 'the tallest building in the world' the architect of the Chrysler Building suddenly added 37 metres to its height by pushing a spire through the top of the building, making his building the tallest in the world. An outstanding example of Art Deco architecture. Its lobby was originally used as a car showroom.

Brooklyn Bridge

The world's first suspension bridge and a great 19th century engineering success. Considered by many to be the world's most beautiful bridge. Superb views of Manhattan from the pedestrian walkway.

Grand Central Terminal

A railway terminal famous for its architecture, its clock, and its concourse, which has a night-sky ceiling painted with 2,500 stars. It is a favourite setting for film-makers. The Oyster Bar on the lower level is famous for its seafood and serves 12,000 oysters daily.

Empire State Building

One of the world's best-known buildings and the climax of the skyscraper-building mania of the 1920s, ended by the 1930s Depression. About 15,000 people work there and another 36,000 people visit it every day. There are

spectacular views from the 102nd floor, 381 metres above street level, especially at sunset. On a clear day you can see for 130 kilometres.

Central Park

The transformation of an area of wasteland into woodlands, lakes, and countryside began in 1860 and took 16 years to achieve. Described as 'the city's lungs', it offers an escape from New York hectic pace and a place for jogging, horse-riding, cycling, sun bathing, boating, and skating, depending on the season. In summer there are free jazz, pop, and classical music concerts, and a theatre festival.

Metropolitan Museum of Art

One of the world's biggest museums with three million exhibits including an Egyptian collection covering 36 centuries, an entire room from Pompeii, seventeen Rembrandts, and a roomful of sculptures by Rodin. Major collections of European and American painting and Primitive Art.

Lincoln Centre

Six concert halls and theatres with a total of 18.000 seats built in the 1960s. Home to the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera Company, and the New York City Opera and Ballet.

4. Find words in the text that mean:

- a. People who come into a foreign country to live there
- b. A large area inside the main entrance of a public building
- c. The top surface of a room
- d. A type of shellfish eaten as food
- e. The most important event
- f. The time when the sun goes down and night begins

- g. Very busy
- h. Objects shown in a museum

5. Explain the underlined words or guess their meaning from the context.

- 1... a rival skyscraper...
- 2... pushing a spire through the top of the building...
- 3... an outstanding example of...
- 4... a pedestrian walkway.
- 5... a favourite setting for film-makers...
- 6... an area of wasteland...
- 7... the city's lungs...

6. Work in pairs. You have two days in New York. Decide which places you want to visit and agree on the programme. Present your programme, giving reasons for your choices.

7. Discuss the question.

Which world city would you like to live in? Why?

8. Project. Write an article for this competition.

Win a month's holiday in the country of your choice.

Tell us which country in the world you would most like to visit and why, and you could win a month's holiday there.

V. The Wonders of the World

The ancient Greeks listed Seven Wonders of the World. In 1994, UNESCO's World Cultural and Natural Heritage List had 411 monuments and sites, and 136 countries committed to protecting them and the list continues to grow.

Deciding which monuments and sites are to go on the list is the task of a committee of 21 specialists. They are elected for a six-year period and are responsible for examining and evaluating proposals from

different countries. They also administer the World Heritage Fund and decide what financial and technical assistance to give to countries for conservation projects.

Of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, only the pyramids remain today. Over centuries countless treasures of earlier civilizations have disappeared, destroyed by man or nature. Protecting our natural and cultural heritage is a complex and never-ending task. Earthquakes, floods, landslides, pollution, wars, and looting are some of the dangers that threaten this heritage. Tourism is also a source of potential damage.

When a site is in serious danger it is put on the World Heritage in Danger List and emergency measures are taken to protect it. Sites which are currently on the danger list include Angkor Wat in Cambodia, the historic centre of Dubrovnik, and the Old City of Jerusalem, all of which have been damaged by war.

1. Which monuments and cultural or natural sites in your country do you think should be on the World Heritage List? Why?

2. Work in groups. Make a list of your preferences for The Seven Wonders of the Modern World. You must reach agreement in ten minutes. Present your list and reasons for your choices to the class.

3. Project. Choose one of the following.

1. Work in groups. Brainstorm ideas to publicize The World Heritage Convention, e.g. promotional literature, television programmes, a travelling exhibition, etc. Then choose one idea and discuss it in more detail. Present your ideas to the class.

2. Write an article for an international magazine proposing a cultural or natural site, building, or monument which you think should be on the World Heritage List, giving your reasons.

VI. The shape of the future

1. Read the review of *The Age of Unreason*, a book about the future of work and organizations by Professor Charles Handy.

The Age of Unreason

In his book **The Age of Unreason**, Professor Handy describes the radical changes that are taking place in our lives today and warns that we must adapt to these changes if we want to survive in the future.

Handy believes that in the future less than 50% of the workforce will be employed full-time by an organization. These full-time employees will be the qualified professionals, technicians, and managers who are essential to an organization. Their working lives will be a lot more demanding than today, but in return they will be well-paid and they will retire earlier. The rest of the workforce will be self-employed or will work part-time, providing organizations with the products and services they require on a contract basis. Handy forecasts a big increase in the number of working mothers in future and believes there will be a large number of unemployed.

Handy gives us plenty of figures to worry about. He estimates that by the year 2040, one person in five will be a pensioner, and one in ten will be over seventy-five years old. There will be one pensioner to every three people of working age, and even more than that in countries such as Germany and Switzerland, where the ratio will be as much as one to two. Pensioners will remain healthy and active for longer than they do today and many will live to be a hundred years old, a fact which leads Handy to suggest that the term *retirement* will no longer be appropriate. He suggests the *third age* is a more appropriate description, since it will be as important a part of our lives as the *first age of learning* and the *second age of working* are for us today.

2. Work in groups. Discuss your answers to the questions below. Give reasons for your opinions.

1. If Handy's predictions about the future of work and organizations come true, what effect do you think they will have on society?

2. What problems will there be when there are two or three pensioners to every person of working age?

3. Do you think the longer-living, healthier, and more active pensioners of the future should make a contribution to society as voluntary workers?

4. What will be the other consequences of a high proportion of the population being in their *third age*?

3. Make six predictions about your own *third age*. Your predictions can be as amusing as you like! Explain what you think the results will be if your predictions come true. Use some of the given expressions.

I'm sure I'll...

It's unlikely...

I'm sure I won't...

I definitely won't...

I expect...

I doubt...

I may...

It's possible...

I'll probably...

VII. The World of Information Technology

1. Discuss the question.

What could you, your family, or your organization use the Internet for?

2. Read the following quotation from Professor Charles Handy. Do you agree or disagree with his views? Explain why.

The world of information technology is a world made for a very fortunate few, maybe 20 % of the population: the people who can work with numbers or ideas, and who live in a little, leafy, isolated suburb surrounded by high gates, and guards; who sit there with their little computers and their telephones and deal with the ideas and information, all over the world. And they don't venture downtown, and they don't use the public transport system, and when they do travel it's in the front parts of international aeroplanes. And they'll have a nice life – a busy life but a nice life. And then there'll be the rest, who don't have access to this technology, who don't know how to use it, who don't know how to make products out of it. And they live

downtown, and they use public transport, and they'll have a tough time. And this is the underclass.

3. Project. Work in groups.

You work for a market research organization. A newspaper has asked your organization to find out whether people are optimistic or pessimistic about the impact of information technology on our lives in the future. Prepare eight questions for a survey. Interview students from another group. Then present your findings to the class.

VIII. Around the world quiz

1. Test your knowledge of international customs and etiquette with our around the world quiz. Circle the answer you think is correct.

1 China

You are invited to someone's house. Which of these may cause offence?

- a Blowing your nose.
- b Refusing an offer of food.
- c Not removing your shoes before entering.

2 Saudi Arabia

You want to hire a car to tour the country. Is this permitted?

- a Yes, but you must take a test first.
- b Yes, but only if you're male.
- c No – tourists have to travel by camel.

3 Finland

You're planning to relax in a Finnish sauna. What should you wear?

- a Nothing.
- b A toweling robe.
- c A bath hat.

4 Nepal

While trekking you want to photograph local villagers. Is this allowed?

- a Yes – the Nepalese love being photographed.
- b No –their religion forbids it.
- c Yes, but you must ask permission first.

5 Cyprus

On a village tour, a local offers you a glyko. Should you

- a Eat it – it's a dessert.
- b Ride it - it's a type of bicycle.
- c Wear it – it's a traditional hat.

6 Morocco

You'd like to visit some mosques but are you allowed to go inside?

- a Yes, but you have to take your shoes off.
- b Yes, you don't have to take your shoes off.
- c You mustn't enter unless you're a Muslim.

7 Sweden

You go out for a meal. How many glasses of wine can you drink before driving back to your hotel?

- a Two.

- b Any amount – there are no drink-driving laws.
- c None.

8 Spain

You'd like to sample the local cuisine. How late can you eat?

- a You have to finish your meal by 9 p.m. Restaurants close early.
- b Spanish restaurants stay open all night.
- c You can eat very late. Spaniards often eat after 11 p.m.

9 Thailand

On a bus, the only free seat is next to a Buddhist monk. Should you take it?

- a Yes, but only if you're male.
- b Buddhist monks aren't allowed to travel by bus.
- c Yes, but you must bow first.

10 Italy

You'd like to visit the duomo (cathedral) on a hot day. To show respect, what should you cover?

- a Your guidebook.
- b Your thighs and shoulders
- c Your head and ears.

11 USA

While peacefully drinking a can of beer in Central Park, you are approached by the police. Why?

- a It's forbidden to drink alcohol in central Park.
- b You are required to use glass or straw.

c You aren't allowed to drink alcohol in central park unless the can is covered.

12 Singapore

You offer a piece of chewing gum to your tour guide. Why does she look shocked?

- a Because chewing gum is forbidden by law.
- b Because tour guides aren't allowed to accept gifts.
- c Because chewing gum is given to animals.

13 India

An Indian friend invites you to a traditional meal. How should you eat?

- a With your left hand only.
- b With your right hand only.
- c With both hands.

14 Japan

You're staying in a Japanese hotel and decide to relax in a traditional, shared bath. What shouldn't you do in the bath tub?

- a You shouldn't stay too long.
- b You shouldn't talk to other bathers.
- c You shouldn't wash yourself.

Answer key

1 b It's considered impolite to refuse food (although it's customary not to accept immediately).

2 b Women are forbidden to drive.

3 a It's considered unhygienic to wear anything.

4 c The Nepalese, like many other cultures, are sensitive about having their photo taken.

5 a A glyko is a traditional dish, given as a welcome to visitors. It's impolite to refuse it or offer money for it.

6 c Non-Muslims are not allowed to go inside Moroccan mosques.

7 c Drinking and driving is illegal.

8 c Restaurants stay open very late in Spain.

9 a Buddhist monks are forbidden to touch or be touched by females.

10 b You should avoid wearing shorts or mini-skirts, or showing bare shoulders.

11 a Alcohol laws vary from state to state but it's usually prohibited to drink alcohol in public places that do not have special license.

12 a You can be fined for chewing gum in Singapore.

13 b Indians traditionally eat with their right hand, as the left hand is considered unclean.

14 c You should shower yourself clean before relaxing in the bath tub.

How you scored

11-14 Congratulations! You've completed your round-the-world tour with the minimum of embarrassment.

7-10 Not bad. Only a few embarrassing situations!

4-6 Not so good. You should learn more about cultural differences.

0-3 You must do some cross-cultural homework before your next trip abroad, or stay at home.

2. Work in groups. Write your own cultural quiz. Write five questions about customs and etiquette in your country, or in other countries you know, and an answer key. Exchange quizzes with another group. Return the quizzes for marking.

IX. Cultural Differences

1. Work in groups. Read the examples of cross-cultural problems. Identify the problem and choose the best answer. Give reasons for your choice.

1 An American family living in Japan for one year made arrangements for their ten-year-old son to attend a Japanese school. All the children had to take a packed lunch (bento) to school. Their son took a normal American lunch of a sandwich, potato crisps, biscuits, and drink. Not long afterwards the teacher contacted the parents and asked them to give their son a more Japanese style lunch. Why?

- a. The teacher was worried the Japanese children would become dissatisfied with their own lunches.
- b. The teacher thought the American-style lunch was not nutritious enough.
- c. The typical Japanese bento is traditional and the child was breaking the tradition
- d. Conformity in Japanese society is valued more than individuality.

2 Chris and Margaret are two English teachers working in Barcelona, Spain. They live in an apartment near the city center and often exchange greetings with their neighbours. They feel they should get to know their neighbours better and on several occasions have invited them for a drink or meal. While they thank them for the invitation, none of the neighbours has ever accepted. What is more, although their neighbours seem to be very sociable and often invite large numbers of relatives during weekends, they have never invited Chris and Margaret. As a result they now feel uncomfortable and believe they are disliked and not wanted in the building. How would you explain the neighbours' behaviour to Chris and Margaret?

- a. They don't want to have any close contact with foreigners.
- b. Social activities at home are usually family occasions and it is not the custom to invite non-family members.
- c. Chris and Margaret have offended them in some way.

d. They are worried about entertaining foreigners and not knowing what to talk to them about.

3 A European manager working for his company in China has just moved into a new building. He is very pleased with the new offices which are on the 14th floor and have pleasant views towards hills and woods. However, when his Chinese staff come to the offices they seem very unhappy. At first no one tells him why, but later one of the staff explains that the new offices are in a very unlucky spot: the 14th floor is unlucky because the word for four is pronounced the same as the word for death and the view is directly in line with the eye of the dragon spirit that inhabits the hill. What should the manager do?

- a. Tell the staff they acting superstitiously and must not be so silly.
- b. Ask the staff for advice. If they suggest consulting a Chinese expert, he should take their advice.
- c. Ignore the problem and do nothing.

2. Compare your answers with the comments below.

Comments

1 Choice d. is the best answer. Conformity is important in Japanese society and the teacher was probably worried that such individuality could set a bad example, or that the boy would be teased or excluded from the group. In many cultures it is considered important that everyone accept certain “rules” of social behaviour in order for society to function smoothly. In such cultures children learn these rules of social behaviour as they grow up. People who come from cultures where individuality is valued more highly than conformity need to be sensitive to these differences and take care not to cause offence.

2 Choice b. is the best answer. In Mediterranean and many other cultures the family is very important. Social activities, especially those in

homes, are often restricted to the extended family group. Relationships with neighbours or work colleagues are usually less important and, although friendships may develop, these friends are not usually invited to participate in family activities. The neighbours would feel uneasy about inviting Chris and Margaret into their homes or accepting invitations to go into theirs.

3 The Chinese believe that spirit forces inhabit every spot on earth and that man and nature have to live in harmony. Before building a house or changing the furniture in an office, a Chinese will consult an expert, a geomancer, who will tell them how to encourage good spirits and avoid upsetting bad ones. Choice b. is the only course of action if the European manager wants to have good relations with his staff. Ignoring their fears would show a great deal of insensitivity and lack of respect for their culture and beliefs.

3. Work in groups. Discuss the questions.

1 Have you ever been in a difficult or embarrassing situations in another culture? What happened? What did you learn from the experience?

2 What problems due to cultural differences might visitors to your country have?

3 What things can you do before and during a first visit to a foreign country to avoid problems due to cultural differences?

4. Project. Work in groups. List some of the things you admire in other countries, e.g. habits, customs, food, drink, way of life, etc. which you would like your country to adopt. Present your choices and give reasons for them.

X. Children's Lifestyles - a Cause for Concern

1. Work in groups. Discuss your opinions.

1 In what way are the lifestyles of children today different from when you were a child?

2 Do you think fear of crime has in any way restricted children's leisure activities?

2. Read the article quickly. Tick sentences true or false.

According to the article

- 1) 80% children in the UK walk to school today.
- 2) children are less active today than in 1930s.
- 3) children get plenty of physical exercise at school.
- 4) researchers believe an inactive lifestyle is a health risk.
- 5) the risk of a child being killed by a stranger is very small.
- 6) press reporting reduces fear of crime.
- 7) an over-protective attitude to children is harmful.

In the 1970s, 80% of children in the UK walked to school unaccompanied. Now only 9% do. The rise of the motor car, combined with terror of crime, has turned children into sedentary captives. Where old-fashioned images show children playing out of doors, in the street or in parks, these days they are more likely to be found slouched over video games and television sets. Children today use up an estimated one-quarter fewer calories than they did in the 1930s and experts, worried about the long-term health effects of childhood inactivity, are warning of a future health crisis.

One psychologist who checked children's heart rates during school physical education activities found that only a handful ever got their heart rates up through exercise sufficiently to be of any benefit. One researcher was struck with horror when children came round to his door asking him to sponsor a four-mile walk, as if this was a great challenge. He used to walk a four-mile walk round trip to school every day of the week in his own childhood.

Some researches are now saying that an inactive lifestyle brings with it a risk factor equivalent to a packet of cigarettes a day, or even that it may be a higher risk than either smoking or high blood pressure. If so, that is a serious cause for concern for our children's generation.

What has been the chief cause of this disastrous change in children's lives? The car, the video game, and the TV have played their part, but the most important factor is the unreasonable fear of crime. Children are imprisoned by their parents' fear.

Women and old people are afraid to go out alone and at night, but the effect on children is far worse. Yet the chances of a child being hurt or killed by a stranger are so small that it is a tragedy to think of all those millions of children living a confined life indoors, because of the rare horror story that grips the imagination.

If it weren't for this largely imagined danger, most parents would like the idea of their children walking to school and learning independence at a suitable age. But the way crimes are reported by the popular press greatly increases fear of crime. If something horrible does happen to a child, there is an implied question " What were the parents doing letting that child out alone?" which is deeply unfair.

We have to start replacing fear of crime, largely unrealistic, with a new fear for our children: of physical damage through idleness, and psychological damage through an over-protected attitude that never lets them explore the world around them.

3. Work in pairs. Explain the underlined words and phrases, or guess their meaning from the context.

- 1) walk to school unaccompanied
- 2) only a handful
- 3) a risk factor equivalent to
- 4) disastrous change
- 5) that grips the imagination

4. Find words or phrases in the text that mean

- 1) extreme fear
- 2) inactive prisoners
- 3) sitting in a lazy way
- 4) very shocked
- 5) to give money for charity after a specific activity
- 6) worry or anxiety
- 7) restricted
- 8) suggested in an indirect way
- 9) allowing
- 10) laziness

5. Project. Work in groups. Write six to eight questions for a public opinion survey to find out people's views on crime, e.g. causes, people's fears, what should be done, etc. Then work in pairs and interview a student from another group. The groups discuss the results and present their findings to the class.

XI. EU Fraud

1. Read the article EU initiative to stamp out fraud and answer the questions.

1. What punishments will fraudsters face under the new rules?
2. How much do critics estimate the real cost of EU fraud to be?

If the quantity of subsidized butter exported to the small Pyrenean country of Andorra under the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) was actually consumed there, every Andorran citizen would have to eat almost four kilos of butter a day.

EU Economic and Finance Ministers meet in Brussels today to finalize new rules to stamp out fraud in the EU. The new rules will apply to the European Union's total annual budget of £67 billion and will enable the European Commission to reclaim funds which have been obtained by fraud or error. Fraudsters will be required to pay interest, and a fine of up to 15% of the amount. They may be banned from claiming funds in the future and could face imprisonment if national justice ministers agree to make EU fraud a crime.

The anti-fraud initiative is a response to a recent report by the European Court of Auditors, the EU spending watchdog, which strongly criticized Brussels for its weak internal auditing procedures and for not taking responsibility for EU funds after they had been paid out. The initiative is also seen as a response to the growing recognition among ministers and officials that such scandals are turning public opinion against the Union.

The biggest fraud cases concerned export subsidies for cereals and beef, payments for storing cereals, and subsidies for olive oil. In one case, investigators discovered that a consignment of wheat had been unloaded from a ship in Hamburg harbour, and then reloaded onto the same ship, so that the shipping company could

claim a subsidy from the CAP for cereals exported from Germany. In another case, officials caught crooks trying to get ten million cigarettes past Hungarian customs, and an investigation into the construction of a 45-kilometre motorway near Naples found costs had risen 1,160% over budget.

A European Commission report estimates the cost of fraud to be £800 million, but critics insist the real figure is ten times that. The Commission rejects these figures as exaggerated, but admits that only a fraction of the total fraud is detected.

2. Find words in the article, which mean

- 1) to get back (something given)
- 2) people who attempt, or are guilty of, fraud
- 3) a sum of money to be paid for breaking a law
- 4) officially forbidden
- 5) demand as a right
- 6) people who officially examine the accounts of an organization
- 7) person or group that protects people's rights
- 8) quantity delivered
- 9) criminals
- 10) made to seem worse (than they are)
- 11) small part
- 12) discovered

3. Work in groups. Discuss your opinion.

- 1 Do you know of any other cases of EU fraud?
- 2 Why do you think there is so much fraud in the EU, particularly in the agricultural sector?
- 3 What changes do you expect to see in the EU in the next ten years?

4. Project. Choose one of the following.

- 1 Find two articles from different newspapers on the same topic. Give an oral summary of the articles, and explain in what ways they are different.
- 2 Write an item for a news programme. The subject matter can be real or imagined.

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ПОЛОУСОВА Наталія Володимирівна
ТАРАСОВА Ганна Сергіївна

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